

General Order

Houston Police Department



ISSUE DATE:

July 27, 2020

NO.

300-15

REFERENCE: Supersedes all prior conflicting Circulars and Directives, and General Order 300-15, dated October 11, 2019

SUBJECT: APPEARANCE AND GROOMING STANDARDS

POLICY

All employees shall dress in a professional conservative manner with design, color, and style suitable to their job function. Personnel shall adhere to the standards set by their assignment.

All classified employees shall possess and maintain in good repair an *official classified uniform* as issued or approved by the department, regardless of the nature of their assignments.

Each classified employee, regardless of assignment, shall be dressed in a manner rendering them capable of safely carrying out the functions of a police officer.

This General Order applies to all employees.

DEFINITIONS

Articles of Faith. Head covers, clothing, jewelry, objects, symbols, and other items of dress of religious significance that are firmly established in an employee's religion and the religious belief requires wearing the items that differ from the department's dress code.

Formal Occasions. A classified employee's funeral, Police Week events, award ceremonies, cadet graduations, and any other occasion so deemed by the Chief of Police.

Houston Police Department Uniform Standards Catalog. A catalog of all equipment and uniforms approved by the Chief of Police for HPD distribution or self-purchase. The catalog is updated upon any revision and is posted on the department's Intranet Portal.

Medical Necessity. For the purposes of this General Order, refers to a bona fide medical condition documented by a physician that may be reasonably accommodated regarding the department's dress code and within the course and scope of the employee's normal job duties.

Official Classified Uniform. The set of uniform items issued to classified employees or approved for wear by the Chief of Police upon becoming a Houston police officer. This excludes *special assignment uniforms*.

Special Assignment Uniform. Any special attire, uniform, or gear that deviates from the *official classified uniform*; displays colors, logos, and/or official patches of the Houston Police Department; and is worn by authority of the Chief of Police.

1 STANDARDS OF APPEARANCE

All employees wearing a department approved uniform, displaying on their person an HPD employee identification card, or representing the department in an official capacity shall follow

the standards of appearance outlined in this section. Except where noted, this section does not apply to undercover classified employees when they act in that capacity. However, when undercover classified employees wear a department approved uniform they shall abide by this section.

Facial Hair and Skin Conditions

The color of an employee's facial hair, if worn, shall be consistent with the individual's regular hair color. Abnormal or unnatural multicolored facial hair is not permitted.

Male civilian employees are allowed to have facial hair that is neatly trimmed and conservative in appearance.

Male classified employees shall maintain either a clean shaven appearance or a facial hair style as described in this subsection. Examples of approved facial hair styles for male classified employees are depicted in the *Attachment* to this General Order.

Requests for an exception to the facial hair policy outlined in this subsection must be submitted in written correspondence via the chain of command to the employee's executive assistant chief.

Mustaches:

Male classified employees may have mustaches without other facial hair, but they shall be neatly trimmed and not extend:

- a. More than half an inch beyond the outer corners of the mouth.
- b. Below the outer corners of the mouth.
- c. Below the upper line of the upper lip.

Extreme styles such as handlebar mustaches are prohibited.

Sideburns:

For male classified employees, sideburns worn without an approved beard shall not extend farther than the lowest tip of the earlobe. Sideburns shall be of a naturally even width and shall end with a clean-shaven horizontal line.

Beards and Goatees:

Male classified employees are allowed to have beards or goatees as outlined in this subsection and as depicted in the *Attachment* to this General Order. If worn, beards and goatees shall be worn with an adjoining mustache and shall be at least one-quarter inch and not more than one-half inch in length.

Each *calendar year* the department shall authorize two growth periods for beards and goatees: March 1 through April 15 and November 1 through December 15. If an officer shaves his beard or goatee below the minimum one-quarter inch length or does not attain the minimum length during an authorized growth period, the officer shall be required to completely shave all facial

hair (except for an approved mustache) and will not be permitted to grow a beard or goatee again until the next authorized growth period.

Goatees with an adjoining mustache, a.k.a. circle beards, shall be neatly trimmed and conservative in appearance. The cheeks, jawline, and neck shall remain clean shaven.

Beards with an adjoining mustache shall cover the jawline and shall be neatly trimmed and conservative in appearance. The cheeks shall be clean shaven and the beard shall extend no more than one inch below the jawline.

The following styles of facial hair are not permitted:

- d. Chin Strap Beards: Beards that are trimmed to a thin line along the jawline without a mustache.
- e. Patchy Beards: Beards of uneven or patchy growth.
- f. Stubble: Beards shorter than one-quarter inch in length.

Police cadets and the following *classified* employees are *not* authorized to wear a beard or goatee:

- g. Command Staff personnel
- h. Probationary police officers
- i. Full-time Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Detail personnel and part-time SWAT Perimeter Team personnel
- j. Full-time Special Response Group (SRG) personnel
- k. Honor Guard personnel
- l. Dive Team personnel
- m. Cadet Training Unit personnel
- n. Personnel called to perform a task for which the department requires a clean shaven appearance or the donning of a gas mask or respirator. Facial hair (other than an approved mustache) shall *not* be worn with a gas mask or respirator because a proper seal cannot be obtained. The officer shall be required to shave and will have to wait until the next authorized growth period to regrow the beard or goatee.

Supervisors' Responsibilities: The department's facial hair policy shall be strictly enforced. Supervisors shall ensure that employees conform to this policy. Commanders shall conduct regular inspections to ensure employees under their command are in compliance with the department's policies regarding facial hair.

Skin Conditions:

If a dermatologist diagnoses a classified employee with a skin condition (e.g., pseudofolliculitis barbae) that precludes shaving to comply with the department's facial hair policy or wearing a respirator effectively, that classified employee, if needed, shall be assigned to a transitional duty assignment that does not require the wearing of an *official classified uniform* or *special assignment uniform*. The transitional duty assignment shall continue until the condition is alleviated. While assigned to a transitional duty assignment, officers shall be allowed to work extra employment, but only if it is nonpolice-related (see Occupational Safety and Health Administration guidelines).

If a dermatologist diagnoses a classified employee with a skin condition that precludes shaving to comply with the department's facial hair policy, that classified employee may be temporarily excluded from applicable parts of the department's facial hair policy, provided the dermatologist prescribes a treatment. If a beard is worn it shall not exceed a length of one-half inch. Affected classified employees shall submit to their supervisors a physician's report including documentation of the diagnosis, prognosis, and the anticipated period during which the classified employee will need to refrain from shaving.

Classified employees who are diagnosed with a skin condition that precludes shaving or wearing a respirator shall adhere to all of the following guidelines:

- o. Classified employees must have a written excuse from a state of Texas certified physician who specializes in dermatology.
- p. Classified employees may go to a dermatologist of their choice, but shall be responsible for all costs associated with the office visits and treatments.
- q. Once the physician prescribes treatment directing the classified employee to wear a beard that does not comply with the department's facial hair policy, the classified employee must have a written excuse from the physician every 30 *calendar days*.

It shall be the responsibility of the classified employee's immediate supervisor to verify all pertinent information in the physician's written statement.

If the attending physician continues to prescribe that the classified employee wear a beard that does not comply with the department's facial hair policy for longer than 90 *calendar days*, the department shall require the classified employee to sign a medical release. The *Authorization for Disclosure of Protected Health Information* form (available on the department's Intranet Portal) shall allow the City's Medical Director to review any necessary medical reports and work with the classified employee's personal physician in developing a treatment plan that will assist the classified employee in complying with the department's facial hair policy. Any independent evaluation mandated by the City shall be at the City's expense.

If it is determined by the classified employee's attending physician and the City Medical Director that a classified employee's skin condition is of such a nature as to permanently prevent the classified employee from shaving, then the classified employee may be excluded from applicable parts of the department's facial hair policy. The officer may be allowed to remain in or return to his regular assignment, including a uniformed position, but is precluded from working SWAT Detail, SRG, or the call for service loop in patrol. Classified employees who have been issued an

escape hood due to a skin condition that permanently prevents shaving may be allowed to work extra employment in uniform with approval from the Chief of Police.

Hair

Any exceptions to the policies outlined in this subsection require approval by the Chief of Police.

All employees shall keep their hair clean and neatly groomed so as to present a professional appearance at all times.

Classified employee's shall wear their hair in a manner suitable to a quasi-military organization and shall not wear their hair in such a way as to interfere with the proper wearing of *official classified uniform* headgear. Hair is not to be worn in unusual ways as to detract from the professional appearance of the uniform. Unusual styles include, but are not limited to, abnormal coloring or multi-coloring, carvings, ducktails, dreadlocks, mohawks, and mullets.

Female Uniformed Classified Employees:

The hair of female classified employees in uniform shall not extend more than four inches below the top of the collar of the *official classified uniform* shirt. Braids or a single ponytail shall be acceptable, but shall not hang below four inches from the top of the collar. Any braids must have a professional appearance. No style can interfere with the wearing of the uniform hat.

Hair restraints may be worn, but they must complement the hair color or be black, brown, silver, or gold in color and have no ornamentation.

Male Uniformed Classified Employees:

The hair of male classified employees in uniform shall not extend more than half an inch below the top of the collar of the *official classified uniform* shirt. Hair on the sides shall not cover more than half of the ears. Hairstyles shall represent conservative and professional standards.

Jewelry

All personnel shall have a professional appearance and any visible jewelry shall be conservative in style.

Classified employees, while wearing a department authorized uniform, shall abide by the appearance standards regarding the wearing of jewelry and accessories outlined below.

- a. All jewelry shall be modest and conservatively styled.
- b. Only one wristwatch at a time may be worn.
- c. Only one ring per hand may be worn. (A wedding set is considered one ring.)
- d. Necklaces of any type shall be concealed at all times.
- e. Bracelets shall not be worn unless it is specifically for a *medical alert* notification.

- f. No insignia except that which is authorized by the Chief of Police shall be worn. Approved insignias are listed in the *Houston Police Department Uniform Standards Catalog*.
- g. Female classified employees may wear small, conservative, single-colored earrings on their earlobes. Earrings shall not extend below the earlobes or have loose or dangling parts and shall not extend above the middle part of the outer ear. Only one earring per ear shall be permitted.
- h. Male classified employees shall not wear earrings.
- i. No jewelry or tie bar shall be worn on the uniform tie. Tie tacks may be worn, but must be concealed from view.
- j. All jewelry, except that which is specifically authorized by this General Order, shall be concealed and not visible while in uniform.

Employees (civilian or classified) shall not wear any type of exposed body piercing jewelry or articles (e.g., nose, tongue, eyebrow). This restriction does not apply to classified employees operating in an undercover capacity with written authorization from an executive assistant chief. Any method of concealment (e.g., bandage) is prohibited.

Makeup and Fingernails

Civilian employees' fingernails shall be conservative in appearance and length and not hinder them from their daily job functions.

Classified employees' fingernails shall be clean and neatly trimmed and shall not extend more than a quarter inch beyond the fingertip or be of such a length as to interfere with the efficient operation of police equipment or cause injury to the employee or others.

Only female employees may wear nail polish or makeup, but both must be subdued and moderate in tones and application.

When nail polish is worn by female classified employees, all fingernails shall be the same single color. When toenail polish is worn and exposed, all toenails shall be the same single color. No visible ornamentation on the nail is allowed.

Physical Standards

All employees shall exercise good bodily hygiene and cleanliness by bathing daily.

All classified employees should, through regular exercise and moderate living habits, maintain themselves in such a physical condition as to be able to handle strenuous physical contacts or the demands required of a law enforcement officer.

All classified employees should maintain their weight proportionate to their height and age as advised by their physician.

Tattoos and Body Art

No employee may have an offensive tattoo or body art visible. Examples of offensive tattoos include, but are not limited to, those that are racial, sexual, discriminatory, gang-related, or obscene in nature. If an employee has visible tattoos or body art that may be considered offensive, such employee shall properly utilize an approved black cover-up tattoo sleeve to conceal such tattoos or body art.

Regardless of content, no tattoo or body art located on the hands or on or above the neck shall be visible on any employee.

Court Attire

Judges of each court have the right to establish their own courtroom dress code standard and all personnel shall adhere to that standard. However, when no standard exists, employees shall dress in professional conservative attire.

Classified employees shall wear an *official classified uniform*, *special assignment uniform*, or professional conservative attire to municipal court.

Classified employees shall not wear *special assignment uniforms* to county, state, or federal court unless required by the court.

Classified employees shall not wear uniform shorts to court.

When wearing plainclothes attire to court, employees shall be guided by the plainclothes regulations outlined in section 5 of this General Order. Male employees shall wear a business suit with shirt and tie, or a sport coat and dress slacks with shirt and tie, and appropriate footwear. Female employees shall wear a business suit and blouse combination, or conservative dress, pantsuit, or blouse and skirt combination, and appropriate footwear.

2 OFFICIAL CLASSIFIED UNIFORM

When in uniform (on duty or off duty working extra employment) officers shall wear the *official classified uniform* or a *special assignment uniform* issued or approved by the Chief of Police. Off-duty classified employees wearing the departmental approved uniform shall respond to citizens or other law enforcement requesting assistance. If flagged down or approached, personnel shall stop and request assistance from on-duty personnel, if necessary.

All uniformed classified employees shall be inspected at least once a month by their supervisor. The inspection shall ensure each classified employee's *official classified uniform* or *special assignment uniform* and equipment meet the standards of this General Order.

Rip Stop uniforms are *official classified uniforms* with embroidered badges and name tags that are not to be worn in place of the dress uniform or for special events, unless authorized by the Chief of Police. Refer to the *Uniform Standards Catalog* for additional guidance on wearing Rip Stop uniforms.

All uniforms when worn shall be clean, neatly pressed, properly hemmed, in good repair, in working order, and worn in a manner that presents a professional appearance.

All weapons and accessory equipment shall be clean, in good repair, in working order, neatly polished, and worn in a manner that presents a professional appearance.

The *official classified uniform* shall include the following approved items or those issued by the department's Uniform Supply and approved by the Chief of Police and documented in the *Uniform Standards Catalog*.

- a. Headgear (hat with shield).
- b. Short- or long-sleeve dark navy blue uniform shirt.
- c. Badge, name tag, pins, ribbons, and other approved insignias.
- d. Tie.
- e. Dark navy blue pants or dark navy blue battle dress uniform (BDU) pants.
- f. Black shiny lacquer finish, Accumold Elite, or Webb Nylon Ballistic style *Sam Browne* belt, firearm holster, closed case handcuff holder (single or double case), ammunition holder or case, accessory equipment holders or cases, keepers (if needed), and other equipment authorized by the Chief of Police.
- g. Black footwear with black or dark navy blue socks.

Classified employees voluntarily choosing to replace equipment or insignias listed above shall do so at their own expense. Item (c) replacements shall mirror the shape, size, and color of the approved insignia. Refer to the *Uniform Standards Catalog* for a list of uniform items approved for individual purchase.

Unless otherwise approved by their supervisor, classified employees assigned to uniformed divisions shall wear their *official classified uniform* or approved *special assignment uniform* while attending or engaged in any of the following activities:

- h. On-duty assignments or activities.
- i. Approved uniformed extra employment.
- j. Approved speaking assignments.
- k. Testifying for the state in courts of law, unless the court approves of or requires plainclothes attire.

Classified employees are issued a pair of dress pants that shall be worn in place of the patrol BDU pants when attending any of the following:

- l. Activities authorized by the Chief of Police.

m. *Formal occasions* such as promotions, graduations, funerals, or other events for which the dress pants would be more appropriate.

n. Disciplinary Review Hearings.

Headgear

The *official classified uniform* headgear for all classified employees shall consist of the department issued military officer style dark navy blue hat. The gold (supervisors) or silver (officers) colored band and department shield is mandatory and shall be attached to the front of the headgear. The top of the shield shall be even with the upper seam of the crown.

The *official classified uniform* headgear for classified Command Staff members shall be the same in appearance as for all supervisors; however, the visor on headgear for those holding the rank of assistant chief or higher will display golden oak leaf embellishments. The gold-colored department shield is mandatory and shall be properly attached to the front center of the headgear. The top of the shield shall be even with the upper seam of the crown.

All uniformed classified employees shall wear the *official classified uniform* hat whenever performing extended assignments subject to high citizen visibility, whether on or off duty. Such specific assignments include traffic control, outside post assignments, and all occasions when the dress uniform is appropriate (e.g., parades, funerals, award and promotion ceremonies, and graduations). All headgear shall be worn level on the head, with the band of the hat parallel to the ground and the visor of the hat centered on the forehead.

Shirts

All uniform shirts shall be clean and neatly tucked inside pants with no overhang. Shirts shall be worn with all buttons buttoned (except the top button) and all zippers zipped completely. When the long sleeve shirt is worn with a tie, the upper most button shall be buttoned. A tie shall not be worn with the short-sleeve shirt.

The cuffs of long-sleeve uniform shirts shall be buttoned and not rolled up. Officers shall not alter the sleeve length or width of the issued short-sleeve uniform shirt or *special assignment uniform* (issued or self-purchased).

All approved regular and special insignia items shall be attached to the uniform shirt in the manner prescribed by this General Order and the *Uniform Standards Catalog*. No shirt other than the one issued shall be worn as part of the *official classified uniform* or *special assignment uniform* unless specifically approved by the Chief of Police.

A crew neck undershirt or T-shirt may be worn under the uniform shirt, but shall not be visible at the neck unless it is dark navy blue or black. Long-sleeve undershirts may be worn with only long-sleeve uniform shirts. Undershirts and T-shirts must be clean and in good repair. They shall not contain any inscriptions or decorative artwork.

There shall be no specific winter or summer uniform shirt. The wearing of either a short- or long-sleeve shirt shall be based entirely on individual comfort.

Pants

The *official classified uniform* pants shall be the issued six-pocket BDU pants or the issued dress pants hemmed to the proper length required for a good fit. The pant leg openings may be altered for length only, not width, and shall be worn as issued. Additionally, uniform pants shall not be worn inside uniform boots unless this action is part of the officer's *special assignment uniform*.

A classified employee requiring nonstandard uniform pants is responsible for being measured by a department approved vendor, via Uniform Supply, in advance to ensure procurement of the pants prior to the date the officer is to receive this department issued piece of clothing. Questions regarding the approved uniform pants should be directed to Uniform Supply.

HPD Collar Emblems

Except as noted below, police officers and sergeants shall have the option of wearing or not wearing the "HPD" collar emblems on their uniform shirt collar. Police officers and sergeants who choose to wear the "HPD" collar emblems (gold or silver according to rank) shall affix them to the *official classified* or *special assignment* uniform shirt collars. The leading edge of each emblem shall be one inch from the collar's leading edge. The bottom of the emblem shall be positioned half an inch from the collar's lower edge. The base of the letters shall be parallel to the lower edge of the collar. No "HPD" collar emblems shall be worn on uniforms with embroidered badges (e.g., Rip Stop uniform).

Some *specialized units*, due to work environment, are authorized to have the "HPD" emblem embroidered on the collar of a *special assignment* shirt. Supervisors should refer to the *Uniform Standards Catalog* for validation of Chief of Police approval.

Police officers and sergeants shall wear the "HPD" collar emblems on their uniform shirt collar while wearing the dress uniform (*official classified uniform* with long-sleeve shirt, tie, and dress pants).

Badges

The badge shall be affixed or sewn on to the front left side of the uniform shirt. The badge is a mandatory item of the *official classified uniform*. No officer shall wear a badge or a hat shield of another officer at any time or for any reason.

Some *specialized units*, due to work environment, are authorized to have the "HPD" cloth badge patch affixed to a *special assignment* shirt. Supervisors should refer to the *Uniform Standards Catalog* for validation of Chief of Police approval.

Name Tag

The name tag shall be worn affixed to the front of the uniform shirt, centered immediately above the right shirt pocket flap or in the allotted slots. When wearing the department issued award ribbon bar, the name tag shall be worn affixed to the front of the uniform shirt, centered immediately above the award ribbon bar. Customized designs or attachments to the name tag are prohibited (e.g., miniature badges, "Serving Since..."). The name tag is a mandatory item of the *official classified uniform*.

Some *specialized units*, due to work environment, and officers with Rip Stop *official classified uniforms* are authorized to have their name embroidered on the right chest area of a *special assignment* shirt. Supervisors should refer to the *Uniform Standards Catalog* for validation of Chief of Police approval.

Rank Insignia

The senior police officer stripes ("corporal" two-bar chevron) shall be worn by all personnel holding the rank of senior police officer. The stripes shall be sewn on both sleeves of both the long-sleeve and short-sleeve *official classified uniform* shirts and select *special assignment uniform* shirts one quarter inch below the lower point of the shoulder patch. The stripes shall be centered laterally with the yoke seam and with the center point up towards the shoulder patch.

Sergeant chevrons shall be affixed to the *official classified uniform* shirts and select *special assignment uniform* shirts worn by all personnel holding the rank of sergeant. Sergeant chevrons shall be sewn on both sleeves of the long-sleeve uniform shirt directly below the shoulder patch and centered laterally with the yoke seam. Smaller chevrons shall be worn on short-sleeve shirts in the same manner.

Insignia bars for the rank of lieutenant shall be worn on the collar, parallel to and up against the front line of the top stitching on the collar in such a way that they are centered between the bottom point of the collar and the top fold.

Insignia stars for the ranks of Chief of Police, executive assistant chief, assistant chief, and commander shall be worn adjacent and parallel to the longer seam along the bottom of the collar beginning just inside the front seam.

Rank insignias are mandatory items of the *official classified uniform* and some *special assignment uniforms*. Refer to the *Uniform Standards Catalog* for details.

Shoulder Patches

Shoulder patches shall be worn on all approved *official classified uniforms*, jackets, windbreakers, dress coats, and some *special assignment uniforms*. The shoulder patches shall be sewn to the upper part of both sleeves. The top of each patch shall touch the shirt's yoke seam and be centered laterally. Refer to the *Uniform Standards Catalog* for details.

Ties

Wearing the issued uniform tie is optional with the long-sleeve shirt except as described below. Ties shall not be worn with the short-sleeve shirt or any shirt that has a sewn-on badge. A buttoned long-sleeve shirt with tie shall be worn on *formal occasions*. When the tie is worn, it shall be worn in the appropriate manner and shall not be affixed to the epaulets or buttonhole of the open collar, or worn in any other fashion contrary to its generally accepted usage. Additionally, if wearing a tie, personnel shall wear their body armor under their *official classified uniform* shirt and not wear the outer vest cover.

Only Solo Motorcycle Detail and Mounted Patrol officers may tuck their ties inside their shirts. Classified employees are authorized to sew the entire length of the smaller tie flap to the backside of the larger flap so long as this modification does not alter the appearance of the front of the tie.

Sam Browne Equipment and Accessories

Mandatory equipment on the Sam Browne shall be as follows:

- a. Loaded approved primary weapon
- b. Issued or approved holster
- c. Closed handcuff case
- d. Handcuffs
- e. Loaded conducted energy device (CED), if assigned to the employee.
- f. Portable radio and radio holder
- g. Fully loaded magazines or speedloaders
- h. Ammunition case
- i. Baton (mandatory as noted below)

All issued equipment shall be worn, carried, and used only as authorized by the Chief of Police. No changes, alterations, modifications altering the appearance, or substitutions shall be made to department issued equipment unless approved by the Chief of Police.

Classified supervisors are approved to modify the silver clasp snap on the closed handcuff case and the ammunition case to a gold clasp snap to match the gold clasps on keepers and HPD emblems.

All accessory equipment or carrying cases not issued by the department but authorized by the Chief of Police for self-purchase, shall be black and plain in design (no basket weave or ornamentation).

Specialized equipment items such as tactical ear pieces or body worn cameras shall be worn when required or necessary for an officer's assignment, according to training, policy, and procedures. Such items must be those approved by the Chief of Police and shall be maintained in the same manner as regular accessory equipment.

For classified employees who have small waists leaving no room on the Sam Browne belt for a closed handcuff case, the division commander of the Training Division may grant permission to wear a handcuff case other than the authorized closed handcuff case (e.g., handcuff loop or keeper). This shall be done on a case-by-case basis and the division commander of the concerned employee shall be notified of the exception.

Baton:

The police baton issued by the department is an optional accessory except as described in General Order 600-17, **Response to Resistance**. Classified employees shall maintain proper care of the issued baton and have the item readily available.

An approved expandable baton or wooden baton may be carried in lieu of the department issued PR-24 baton, providing the classified employee has been properly trained in its use.

Firearm Holster:

The appropriate holster issued or approved by the department shall be the *official classified uniform* holster (see General Order 400-05, **Firearms Qualification and Control**).

CED Holster:

The CED holster issued or approved by the department shall be the *official classified uniform* CED holster. Modification of the issued or approved holster in any form is prohibited. Classified employees shall wear this holster only in a cross-draw manner. Under no circumstances shall the CED be worn adjacent to the holstered primary weapon.

Knives:

Knives shall not be worn in such a way that they are visible.

Fox Listen Only Earphone

Classified personnel are required to have access to the utilization of the Fox Listen Only Earphone (ear piece) at all times, but it is optional for daily use unless personnel are involved in active shooter situations, protests, or other events where noise or understanding transmissions is an issue or concern. During such events the utilization of the ear piece is mandatory.

Personal Electronic Equipment

Electronic devices furnished by the department shall be worn as mandated by the department. All personal electronic equipment (e.g., cellular telephones, pagers) carried by uniformed officers shall be worn only on the Sam Browne or shall be concealed.

When worn on the Sam Browne, electronic equipment shall be black or shall be carried in a black covered case.

While wearing the *official classified uniform* or *special assignment uniform* and in public view, classified employees may wear electronic earpieces, microphones (e.g., Bluetooth device), or cameras only as specifically assigned and/or authorized by the department.

Footwear**Shoes:**

Shoes or boots are to be worn with all approved uniforms and shall be one of the following:

- a. Lace-type military dress shoes of a high or low-quarter style with rubber walking heels.
- b. Boots of Wellington or similar type with rubber walking heels and a rounded, smooth toe design.

- c. Lace-type, low-quarter leather shoes with smooth toes and rubber walking heels.
- d. Oakley SI Patrol Boots or a similar lace-type military boot that has mesh along the sides of the boot, as long as the boot has a smooth rounded toe capable of maintaining a shine.

Footwear must be capable of maintaining a shine. All approved footwear shall be black and have no ornate, decorative stitching or perforation that detracts from a professional appearance. Boot tops must be of sufficient height to prevent pant leg bottoms from falling into or hanging inside the boot.

Specially approved shoes may be worn with the uniform if a classified employee has a bona fide medical reason that has been approved by the officer's division commander.

Specially approved shoes may be worn when required to perform a special assignment for which the *official classified uniform* shoes would be inappropriate or prohibitive to the task. Classified employees in *specialized units* shall use the shoes approved for their assignment.

Socks:

Plain black or dark navy blue socks shall be worn with all approved uniforms.

Dress Uniforms

When attending *formal occasions*, classified employees shall wear a dress uniform. The dress uniform for classified employees consists of the *official classified uniform* with the issued "dress" pants, long-sleeve shirt, tie, award ribbon bar, HPD collar emblems, and *official classified uniform* headgear. Body armor shall be worn under the *official classified uniform* shirt.

The Chief of Police and the classified Command Staff dress uniform consists of the white long-sleeve shirt, tie, uniform dress slacks, black belt, dress coat, and headgear. The Chief of Police and Command Staff members may wear their dress uniform on other occasions at their discretion. Refer to the *Uniform Standards Catalog* for additional guidance on wearing the Command Staff dress uniform.

Cool or Cold-Weather Gear

Coats, Jackets, Windbreakers:

During periods of cold or cool weather, uniformed classified employees may wear their department issued or approved coat, jacket, or windbreaker. Coats, jackets, *special assignment uniforms*, and gear are listed in the *Uniform Standards Catalog*. These items are approved by the Chief of Police and may be worn while on duty.

Classified employees shall not wear any cool or cold-weather gear not approved by the Chief of Police.

Senior police officers may individually purchase and affix silver metal two-bar chevrons to the collar areas of the cold weather gear in the same manner as indicated for the lieutenant bars (see section 2, subsection, "Rank Insignia"). These bars shall not be affixed to the *official classified* or *special assignment* uniform shirts.

Sergeants may individually purchase and affix gold metal sergeant chevrons to the collar areas of the cold weather gear in the same manner as indicated for the lieutenant bars. These bars shall not be affixed to the *official classified* or *special assignment* uniform shirts.

Cool or Cold-Weather Headgear:

The approved cool or cold-weather headgear for employees will be the option of either the *official classified uniform* hat, the knit sock cap (black in color), or the Blauer B. Cool Performance Cap during the months of November through March and when the city of Houston temperature falls below 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 degrees Celsius).

If not already sewn on, classified employees are advised to take their self-purchased knit sock cap or Blauer B. Cool Performance Cap to Uniform Supply to receive the official patches or small HPD shoulder patch. Uniform Supply staff shall examine the knit sock cap or Blauer B. Cool Performance Cap to make sure they are the approved items per the Chief of Police. If the items are approved, Uniform Supply shall provide a silver badge patch to police officers or a gold badge patch to supervisory personnel. For the Blauer B. Cool Performance Caps, the small HPD shoulder patch will be provided. The badge patch or the small HPD shoulder patch shall be stitched on the front portion of the cap (aligned and centered) in permanent fashion. Only one cloth badge patch or small HPD shoulder patch shall be provided per classified employee per hat.

Classified employees may wear black or dark navy blue earmuffs or winter headbands along with the official cool or cold-weather uniform headgear.

Gloves:

Classified employees may self-purchase cool or cold-weather gloves (not to be confused with search gloves) that are plain black or dark navy blue to wear as long as the gloves allow for the proper hand and finger use and control of police equipment.

Turtleneck Undershirts:

During periods of cool or cold weather, uniformed classified employees may wear turtleneck undershirts beneath the long-sleeve uniform shirt. The turtleneck must be black or dark navy blue and may bear the embroidered "HPD" insignia on the upper collar (silver or white for officers and gold or yellow for supervisors). No other inscription or alternative colors are permitted.

Rain Gear

During periods of inclement weather, uniformed classified employees are advised to use the department issued rain gear for their own comfort and to avoid unnecessary damage to the *official classified uniform* and gear. Rain gear shall not be worn as a replacement for more appropriate department issued cool or cold-weather gear when the weather is cool or cold but not raining.

Only when classified employees have to respond on foot to areas with high water (above four inches but less than a foot) may the rubber boots issued by Uniform Supply be worn. Classified employees shall not wear rubber boots while driving a City vehicle or on a continuous basis throughout their shift.

Search Gloves

Officers may wear approved puncture resistant gloves only when searching suspects or prisoners. The Training Division shall maintain a list of approved gloves. These gloves are not furnished by the department and purchasing the approved search gloves is the responsibility of the individual officer.

3 INSIGNIAS

Unless otherwise directed, Uniform Supply shall distribute all insignias (e.g., awards, bars, emblems, medals, patches, pins, and ribbons). Uniform Supply is also responsible for compiling and maintaining the *Uniform Standards Catalog*, which has a list of all approved insignias, the placement of insignias on the uniform, and where to obtain them if not available through Uniform Supply. Classified employees are allowed to wear only those insignias that are on the approved list (see the *Uniform Standards Catalog*) or that have been approved by the Chief of Police or awarded through HPD's awards program. See General Order 200-20, **Awards and Commendations**, for additional information.

4 SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT UNIFORMS

Special assignment uniforms authorized by the Chief of Police may be worn by employees assigned to units that have a standard uniform instead of the *official classified uniform*. *Special assignment uniforms* shall not be altered without written permission from the Chief of Police. Uniform Supply shall issue most approved *special assignment uniforms*. These *special assignment uniforms* shall be returned to Uniform Supply within 30 calendar days after the employee is no longer assigned to the *specialized unit*.

Employees assigned to a *specialized unit* shall be issued a *special assignment uniform* for that unit or division. Such *special assignment uniforms* shall be worn while in the performance of their duties. *Special assignment uniforms* shall not be worn for any purpose not associated with the employees' assignments.

An exception to this policy is allowed if the classified employee is working police-related extra employment requiring the classified employee to ride a horse, motorcycle, or bicycle. Such classified employees shall wear the *special assignment uniform* that matches that particular job.

Issued riot control helmets, motorcycle helmets, or other types of headgear may be worn on assignments or occasions as required. Chinstraps shall be fastened on all helmets when they are being worn unless otherwise directed by a supervisor.

Authorized *special assignment uniforms* for particular units or job requirements are listed in the *Uniform Standards Catalog*. No employee shall wear a *special assignment uniform* unless approved to do so by the Chief of Police.

Employees assigned to *specialized units* in patrol divisions may purchase and wear a specialized insignia T-shirt that has been approved by the Chief of Police (see the *Uniform Standards Catalog*).

Any other division, unit, or detail requiring a *special assignment uniform* must have written approval from the Chief of Police before wearing any such uniform.

5 PLAINCLOTHES REGULATIONS – CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES

Except as otherwise noted in this General Order, undercover classified employees are allowed to wear any clothing and jewelry appropriate for the undercover assignment.

The remainder of this section does not apply to undercover officers.

Unless otherwise indicated, all plainclothes classified employees whenever performing a police function shall dress conservatively in a design, color, and style suitable to their job function. Employees shall present a businesslike appearance at all times. All clothing and footwear shall be clean, neat, and in good repair. Hats shall be conservative in design and color. Baseball caps are not permitted unless otherwise approved by the Chief of Police.

Division commanders shall determine the appropriate level of dress for an officer's job function. Supervisors shall allow moderate deviations in the type and style of clothing and jewelry worn by plainclothes officers if required for a specific assignment, working condition, or event.

While on duty, all classified employees shall carry their badge, department identification, a pair of handcuffs, and a loaded and approved *primary weapon*. The *primary weapon* shall be carried according to General Order 400-05, **Firearms Qualification and Control** and department policy.

See General Order 300-14, **Extra Employment**, for additional plainclothes regulations regarding extra employment.

6 RESTRICTIONS

Classified employees shall not wear any portion of a department issued or approved uniform while under suspension.

When the department issues a particular uniform item, that item shall supersede any similar item previously issued. If the department does not issue a particular item, officers shall use only those comparable items that have been approved in writing by the Chief of Police.

The uniform shall always be worn as a total unit except as authorized by General Orders or as directed by a supervisor. Officers shall not give or loan any part of their department uniform to a person who is not a classified employee of the department.

Officers shall wear department uniforms only when acting in an official capacity.

Except as authorized by General Order 200-41, **Department Presence on Social Media and the Internet**, classified employees shall not intentionally and publicly appear in or post or allow to be posted any print, photograph, video recording, or other representation of themselves while wearing any portion of a department uniform (or any other uniform that resembles what is issued by the department) without prior written consent from the Chief of Police. This prohibition is in effect even if the situation is not for personal gain or benefit.

This mandate does not prohibit classified employees from having personal or family pictures taken for display in their office or home.

Employees shall comply with the restrictions regarding the use of tobacco as outlined in General Order 200-31, **Smoking, Tobacco Use, and Electronic Cigarettes**.

Logos

To ensure the Houston Police Department displays a professional image, any division, unit, detail, or employee producing or having produced any item (coins, hats, mugs, shirts, etc.) containing any HPD or City of Houston logo must present this item to the Uniform Standards Committee. Once reviewed, the committee shall present their recommendation to the Chief of Police for a final decision. This order applies even if no City funds are used in the production.

The employee must submit correspondence through the employee's chain of command to the Deputy Director of the Office of Planning & Data Governance. The correspondence must explain in detail the item to be reviewed, its use, justification for the item, and costs, if applicable.

7 DEPUTY SANDEEP DHALIWAL ARTICLES OF FAITH EXCLUSIONS AND EXCEPTIONS

The dress code applies to all HPD employees. HPD does not discriminate against any employee because of that person's race, color, religion, sex, sexual or gender orientation, national origin, age, disability, handicap, or veteran status. The department is committed to making reasonable accommodations for an employee in regard to a dress code issue when the employee proves a unique need due to a firmly-established religious belief and such belief does not otherwise prevent the employee from fulfilling all of his normal assigned job duties. An employee who believes that for religious reasons he should be allowed to deviate from the dress code policy may request an accommodation from the Chief of Police. The request shall include the employee's:

- a. Name
- b. Present assignment
- c. Immediate supervisor's name
- d. Commander's name
- e. Reason for requesting the accommodation

Each accommodation request shall be specific in nature and shall be submitted individually. The employee may request as many accommodations as may be required by his religion.

The Chief of Police shall review each request on a case-by-case basis. All circumstances surrounding the request shall be investigated in order to determine whether the accommodation shall be granted or denied. Any and all potential safety issues and/or operational concerns the requested accommodation would have on the employee, the department, other employees, prisoners, and the public shall be taken into account.

If an accommodation that refers to the wearing of an *article of faith* is approved, the cost associated with the procuring of and maintaining of the *article of faith* shall be the responsibility of the employee.

Any approved accommodation shall be noted in writing and specifically describe the accommodation being made by the department. If an employee is not satisfied with the ruling of the department, the employee may request a hearing with the Chief of Police to present the reasons for the request for the accommodation and/or the objections to the specific nature of the approval or denial. A denial of a request for accommodation shall state the reasons for such denial.

In the event that an accommodation becomes a health or safety issue for any employee, prisoner, or the public, HPD reserves the right to cancel a previously approved accommodation. An employee may appeal the cancellation of an accommodation in the same manner as the employee would appeal the denial of an accommodation.

Personnel assigned to a covert operations assignment or those assigned to duties that require uniform modification for specific duties not addressed in this policy may be excluded from compliance with specific portions of the policy.

8 MEDICAL EXCLUSIONS AND EXCEPTIONS

The department shall make reasonable accommodations for an employee in regard to a dress code issue when the employee proves a unique need due to a *medical necessity* and such condition does not otherwise prevent the employee from fulfilling all of his normal assigned job duties. An employee who believes that for medical reasons he should be allowed to deviate from the department's dress code policy may request an accommodation from the Chief of Police as outlined in section 7 of this General Order. The Chief of Police shall review each request on a case-by-case basis as outlined in section 7 and any approved accommodation or denial shall be specifically noted in writing to the employee.

In the event that an accommodation becomes a health or safety issue for any employee, prisoner, or the public, HPD reserves the right to cancel a previously approved accommodation. An employee may appeal the denial or cancellation of an accommodation in the same manner as outlined in section 7.

9 IDENTIFICATION

Whenever personnel are on police property, they shall wear their official Police Department identification card prominently displayed at or above the waist on the front of their person so that the employee's photograph and name are easily visible.

Classified employees may display their badge along with the official identification; however, it is not considered a substitute. Only classified employees in an approved uniform are exempt from this requirement.

Employees assigned to an airport location shall wear their specific airport issued identification tag prominently displayed at or above the waist on the front of their person so that the employee's photograph and name are easily visible to clear security checkpoints.

Employees working at the offices of other government entities shall wear the appropriate identification as assigned by that entity.

10 ISSUED EQUIPMENT

An employee issued uniforms or equipment is responsible for returning issued equipment at the time of resignation, termination, or transfer to another division or unit that does not require utilization of the issued equipment.

Each classified employee shall be issued a specific number of the following standard department uniform items during Academy training or after graduation from the Police Academy:

- a. Ammunition case
- b. Badge (issued by Transfers Allocations & Promotions [TAP] Unit)
- c. Baton
- d. Baton ring
- e. Body armor
- f. CED and holster (issued by Academy)
- g. Dress belt
- h. Firearm holster
- i. Flashlight ring
- j. Fox Listen Only Earphone (ear piece)
- k. Handcuff case (closed)
- l. Hat shield (issued by TAP Unit)
- m. HPD collar pins
- n. Keepers
- o. Safety Vest
- p. Mourning badge cover
- q. Name tag
- r. Pants – six-pocket BDU (5 pairs)
- s. Pants – four-pocket dress pants (1 pair)
- t. Portable radio (Motorola issue radio)
- u. Radio holder
- v. Rain gear
- w. Sam Browne belt
- x. Shirts, long-sleeve (2)
- y. Shirts, short-sleeve (4)
- z. Tie (clip-on)
- aa. Uniform hat and cover
- bb. Whistle
- cc. Winter coat

Uniforms shall be replaced if they have an unprofessional appearance (e.g., torn or frayed). For classified employees, a maximum of three pairs of pants and three shirts may be replaced at any one time depending on availability and only after a demonstrated need.

In addition to the *official classified uniform* allotment, the Chief of Police and classified Command Staff members (commander and above) shall be issued three white long-sleeve shirts, a dress coat, hat, and two additional pairs of dress slacks.

Personnel are required to turn in any used articles prior to receiving any replacements. Personnel shall do the same when any new item is issued by the department that supersedes one previously provided.

11 BODY ARMOR

Classified employees shall wear department approved body armor as required by this General Order and/or other department directive. Approved body armor and other department approved ballistic protection items are listed in the *Uniform Standards Catalog*. The catalog shall indicate when and the manner in which such approved items shall be worn.

Supervisors shall ensure compliance with this policy. Officers found to be not in compliance will be subject to discipline.

The following shall wear their body armor while wearing the *official classified uniform*:

- a. Classified employees regularly or temporarily assigned to a uniformed division at which they regularly interact with the public.
- b. Classified employees working extra employment.

Plainclothes classified employees shall also wear body armor when conducting high-risk operations (e.g., raids and high-risk warrant operations conducted by Tactical Operations, Narcotics, Vice, Major Offenders). Commanders shall determine what is considered high risk for their individual divisions.

Uniform Supply shall issue body armor to only classified employees unless otherwise approved by the Chief of Police. Additionally, classified employees shall be provided with an instruction manual or a copy of the manual that outlines the proper maintenance and care procedures for department issued body armor.

Upon acceptance of the body armor, classified employees shall maintain and care for the vest in the manner prescribed in the instruction manual.

Body armor shall be worn by both instructors and students when shooting at a departmental range or at a departmental sponsored firearms training event.

To guard against the potential development of heat-related illness, especially while wearing body armor, supervisors should be cognizant of particular assignments in conditions of abnormally high heat and/or humidity. In such circumstances, supervisors should ensure their subordinates have adequate breaks to cool down and remain hydrated. Classified employees should notify their supervisors of the need for breaks during such assignments.

Exceptions

Classified employees may elect not to wear body armor under the following circumstances:

- a. Uniformed classified employees who are assigned to administrative positions and do not normally have contact with suspects or prisoners.
- b. Exempt status has been given in writing from the Chief of Police to a division or unit that requires a *special assignment uniform*.

Uniformed classified employees working an assignment listed above in this subsection shall wear their body armor whenever they leave that assignment and go to lunch or any other place where they may possibly interact with the public.

12 INSPECTIONS

Supervisors shall hold regular division inspections to ensure compliance with this General Order and related directives, and corrective action shall immediately be taken when violations occur. Supervisors shall be held responsible for the appearance of their subordinates.

13 NEW UNIFORM ITEMS

Proposed new uniform items must be submitted through the chain of command to the Office of Planning & Data Governance for review by the Uniform Standards Committee.

14 REFERENCE MATERIAL

Houston Police Department Uniform Standards Catalog

Meet & Confer Agreement (Classified)

Respiratory Protection Standard 29 CFR 1910.134, Occupational Safety and Health Administration Section 5(a) (1 & 2), Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970



Art Acevedo
Chief of Police

GENERAL ORDER 300-15

Attachment

Approved Facial Hair Styles for Male Classified Employees

The following figures depict approved facial hair styles for male classified employees as described in this General Order.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

Figure 1: Clean Shaven

Figure 2: Mustache

Figure 3: Goatee with adjoining mustache

Figures 4 and 5: Beard with adjoining mustache